

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 180944Z

12

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

----- 054675

O 171851Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8554

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 3753

NODIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (RECATEGORIZING EXDIS MESSAGE TO NODIS)

8. KING ALSO OFFERED WHAT HE SAID WERE BITS AND PIECES OF INFORMATION WHICH HE SAID WERE GLANED FROM THE SYRIANS WHICH TENDED TO DEMONSTRATE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION. THE SYRIANS SAID THAT A LEBANESE GUNBOAT UNDER CHRISTIAN CONTROL AND TRIED TO INVESTIGATE A REPORT THAT A SOVIET SHIP WAS UNLOADING IN TRIPOLI OR BRINGING FROM LIBYA SOVIET ARMS (IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHICH) THE LEBANESE BOAT HAD BEEN FIRED UPON BY AN UNKNOWN PURSUER EN ROUTE AND SYRIANS PRESUMED IT WAS THE SOVIETS. SYRIANS SAID THEY WERE CERTAIN FROM AIR RECONNAISSANCE AND OTHER SOURCES THAT SOVIETS HAD A NUMBER OF NAVAL VESSELS IN POSITION IN THE AREA.

9. SYRIANS REPORTED TO KING ON TWO AIRFIELDS UNDER CONSTRUCTIONS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON BY THE LEFT AND THE PALESTINIANS ONE HAS A RUNWAY OF 800 METERS AND THE OTHER OF 2000 METERS SYRIANS TOLD THE KING THAT THEY BELIEVE THAT IT IS MORE THAN PROBABLE THAT IRAQI, LIBYAN AND POSSIBLE CUBAN ELEMENTS WILL BEGIN TO ARRIVE BY AIR ALONG WITH ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

10. SYRIANS DETECT A REAL HARDENING IN THE PLO POSITION. THEY REFUSED TO COME TO THE SCHEDULED DAMASCUS MEETING JULY 16 SET UP IN ACCORD WITH AN ARAB LEAGUE RESOLUTION AND HAD ISSUED A PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE POINT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 180944Z

11. ASAD CONCLUDED KING SAID THAT RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS ARE

AT A CRUCIAL POINT. ASAD WILL NOT ALTER HIS PRESENT POLICY
PSOTIONS OR ATTIDUES ON THE LEBANESE SITUATION. THERE ARE HOWEVER
LIMITES TO WHAT HE CAN DO IN FACE OF HEAVY PRESSURE FROM THE
SOVIES. ASAD IS ASKING HIS FRIENDS FOR HELP. THE SOVITS HAVE
MANY MEANS OF BRINGING PRESSURE AGAINST HIM, INCLUDING AN ARMS
CUTOFF AND HALTING THE SUPPLY OF MILITARY SPARE
PARTS AND ECONOMIC ASSISTACE. THE PRINCIPAL
POINT IS THAT ASAD WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER HE CAN RELY ON
ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SUPPORT FROM HIS FRIENDS AND ELSEWHERE.
KING MENTIONED THAT KHADDAM HAD SPECIFICALLY TALKES ABOUT
SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN AND THE KING SAID THAT THE SYRIANS UNDERSTOOD
THE SAME MESSAGE WOULD BE RELAYED TO THE US.

12. I ASKED THE KING WHAT JORDAN WOULD BE DOING. HE SAID THAT IT
WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT JORDAN WOULD HELP SYRIA IN ANY WAY IT COULD
IF THE GOING GOT ROUGH. IN ADDITOON JORDAN WA USING WHATEVER
FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE IT HAD TO PASS ON THE WORD OF ASAD'S
PLIGHT AND SEEK HELP. KING SAID HE WILL SPECIFICALLY BE TALKING
WITH SHAH ABOUT THIS TOMORROW. KING NOTED THAT HE EXPECAS DOES
ASAD THAT SYRIAN-SOVIET SITUATION COULD WELL DEVELOP INTO
AOTHER EGYPT-SOVIET CRISIS OVER WEAPONS AND SPARE PART
SUPPLY. ASAD ALSO POINTED TO THE RECENT ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW
NUMERRI IN THE SUDAN AND TO CERTAIN UNSPECIFIED DEVELOPMENTS
IN EGYPT AS EVIDENCE OF LIBYAN--SOVIET MEDDLING.

13. ASADS ASSESSEMENT KING SAID WAS THAT IF LEBANON GOES IT WILL
BE A VERY SEVERE BLOW FOR THE AREA AND THAT KUWAIT AND THE SAUDIS
MIGHT BE NEXT. KING COMMENTED THAT MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT ASAD
HAS MORE NFLUENCE ON ME THA I HAVE ON HIM, BUT LOOK AT THE WAY
HE IS TALKING NOW. ASAD IS EVEN SAYING THAT HIS OWN PEOPLE ARE
NOT PULLING BEHIND HIM THE WAY THE JORDANIANS LINED UP WITH
HUSSEIN IN THE 1970 CRISES

14. KIVNG THEN SAID THAT ASAD HAD SSESSED THE COMMUNITY PART
IN IRAQA AS BEING VERY STRONG. WHILE IT COOPERATED FULLY WITH THE
IRAQI BAATH NOW IN SPOITE OF THAT SOOPERATION IT COULD MOVE OFF
O N ITS OSNW AGAINST THE REGIME.

15. ASAD ASLSO NOTED ACCORDING TO THE KING THAT EGYPT HAD
TERMINATED THE SOVIETS FLEETS USE OF ITS PORTS. SYRIA HAD BEEN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 180944Z

ASKED BY THE SOVIET FOR USE OF ITS PORTS AND HAD REFUSED. ASAD
NOW FEELS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE VERY INTERESTED IN OTHER FACILITIES
AND RELATES THIS TO THE SOVIET STAND AGAINST SYRIA IN LEBANON.

16. ASAD POINTED OUT THAT A SOVIET ECONOMIC DELGATION EXPECTED
IN SYRIA JULY 14 HAD BEEN CANCELLED AND THAT SYRI TOOK THIS AS A
SIGNAL FROM THE SOVIETS ON FUTURE ECONOMCI AND MILITARY SUPPLY
POLICY FROM MSCOW. I ASKED THE KING WHTHER THE SOVIET ULTIMATIM

THAT KHADDAM HAD TALKED ABOUT SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT THE SOVIET WOULD STOP MILITARY AID TO SYRIA. KING SAID THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN A COPY BUT THAT HIS IMPRESSION WAS THAT THE SOVIETS HAD ONLY IMPLIED THAT THEY WOULD STOP SUCH AID.

17. FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO THE EMBASSY THE KING CALLED AND SAID THAT HE HAD FORGOTTEN TO MENTION THAT ASAD HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE RIGHTIST WERE IN GOOD SHAPE NOW, BUT THAT IF THE SOVIETS CARRIED THROUGH WITH THEIR THREAT HE COULD NOT BE SURE HOW THEY WOULD FARE.

18. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT ASA AND POSSIBLY THE KING HAVE PULLED OUT ALL STOPS TO CONVINCE US THAT THE SOVIETS MEAN BUSINESS WITH THE SYRIANS OVER LEBANON. AS YOU KNOW FROM TIME TO TIME WE HAVE RELAYED SEMIPANIC MESSAGES FROM ASAD PASSED BY THE KING. WE ARE CLEARLY IN NO PSOTION TO JUDGE VALIDITY. SOME PORTIONS OF WHAT HAS BEEN PASSED ON HAVE GIVEN TO US EARLY BY THE KING. OTHER PORTIONS SEEM TO TRACK WITH VARIUS REPORTS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN FROM MOSCOW, DAMASCUS AND BEIRUT. IN THE PAST WHEN WE HAVE RECEIVED SUCH MESSAGES WE HAVE LATER TRIED TO CHECK BAC ON WHAT THE KING HAS PASSED ON. IN NO INSTANCE HAVE WE BEEN ABLE TO FIND A SITUATION WHERE THE KINGSMESSAGES HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY CONTRADICTED BYREPORTS FROM OTHER RELIABLE SOURCES::HOWEVER WE CANNOT PROVE THE NEGATIVE--THE THE KINGS MESSAGES ALSO ARE NOT SHAPED TO FIT HIS OWN IDEAS AND OBJECTIVES. IN THE PRESENT CASE THE KINGS OWN APPROACH IS CLEARLY EXTREMELY CLOSE TO ASAD'S AFTER HEARING THE AND APPARENTLY SUPPORTIVE STORY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET PRESSURE ON THE SYRIANS ARMS RELATIONSHIP, PORT OF THE I TOLD THE KING THAT IT SEEMED TO BE GOOD THING FOR HIM AND JORDAN THAT HE HAD NOT SIGNED UP AN AIR DEFENSE DEAL WHEN HE WAS IN MOSCOW LAST MONTH. HE LAUGHED AND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 180944Z

SAID THAT IT CERTAINLY WAS. END COMMENT
PICKERING

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 172011Z

63

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 052235

O 171851Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8554

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2AMMAN 3753

EXDIS

8. KING ALSO OFFERED WHAT HE SAID WERE BITS AND PIECES OF INFORMATION WHICH HE SAID WERE GLANED FROM THE SYRIANS WHICH TENDED TO DEMONSTRATE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION. THE SYRIANS SAID THAT A LEBANESE GUNBOAT UNDER CHRISTIAN CONTROL AND TRIED TO INVESTIGATE A REPORT THAT A SOVIET SHIP WAS UNLOADING IN TRIPOLI OR BRINGING FROM LIBYA SOVIET ARMS (IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHICH) THE LEBANESE BOAT HAD BEEN FIRED UPON BY AN UNKNOWN PURSUER EN ROUTE AND SYRIANS PRESUMED IT WAS THE SOVIETS. SYRIANS SAID THEY WERE CERTAIN FROM AIR RECONNAISSANCE AND OTHER SOURCES THAT SOVIETS HAD A NUMBER OF NAVAL VESSELS IN POSITION IN THE AREA.

9. SYRIANS REPORTED TO KING ON TWO AIRFIELDS UNDER CONSTRUCTIONS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON BY THE LEFT AND THE PALESTINIANS ONE HAS A RUNWAY OF 800 METERS AND THE OTHER OF 2000 METERS SYRIANS TOLD THE KING THAT THEY BELIEVE THAT IT IS MORE THAN PROBABLE THAT IRAQI, LIBYAN AND POSSIBLE CUBAN ELEMENTS WILL BEGIN TO ARRIVE BY AIR ALONG WITH ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

10. SYRIANS DETECT A REAL HARDENING IN THE PLO POSITION. THEY REFUSED TO COME TO THE SCHEDULED DAMASCUS MEETING JULY 16 SET UP IN ACCORD WITH AN ARAB LEAGUE RESOLUTION AND HAD ISSUED A PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE POINT.

11. ASAD CONCLUDED KING SAID THAT RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS ARE AT A CRUCIAL POINT. ASAD WILL NOT ALTER HIS PRESENT POLICY POSITIONS OR ATTITUDES ON THE LEBANESE SITUATION. THERE ARE HOWEVER
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 172011Z

LIMITS TO WHAT HE CAN DO IN FACE OF HEAVY PRESSURE FROM THE SOVIETS. ASAD IS ASKING HIS FRIENDS FOR HELP. THE SOVIETS HAVE MANY MEANS OF BRINGING PRESSURE AGAINST HIM, INCLUDING AN ARMS CUTOFF AND HALTING THE SUPPLY OF MILITARY SPARE PARTS AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. THE PRINCIPAL POINT IS THAT ASAD WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER HE CAN RELY ON ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SUPPORT FROM HIS FRIENDS AND ELSEWHERE.

KING MENTIONED THAT KHADDAM HAD SPECIFICALLY TALKES ABOUT SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN AND THE KING SAID THAT THE SYRIANS UNDERSTOOD THE SAME MESSAGE WOULD BE RELAYED TO THE US.

12. I ASKED THE KING WHAT JORDAN WOULD BE DOING. HE SAID THAT IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT JORDAN WOULD HELP SYRIA IN ANY WAY IT COULD IF THE GOING GOT ROUGH. IN ADDITOON JORDAN WA USING WHATEVER FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE IT HAD TO PASS ON THE WORD OF ASAD'S PLIGHT AND SEEK HELP. KING SAID HE WILL SPECIFICALLY BE TALKING WITH SHAH ABOUT THIS TOMORROW. KING NOTED THAT HE EXPECAS DOES ASAD THAT SYRIAN-SOVIET SITUATION COULD WELL DEVELOP INTO AOTHER EGYPT-SOVIET CRISIS OVER WEAPONS AND SPARE PART SUPPLY. ASAD ALSO POINTED TO THE RECENT ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW NUMERRI IN THE SUDAN AND TO CERTAIN UNSPECIFIED DEVELOPMENTS IN EGYPT AS EVIDENCE OF LIBYAN--SOVIET MEDDLING.

13. ASADS ASSESSEMENT KING SAID WAS THAT IF LEBANON GOES IT WILL BE A VERY SEVERE BLOW FOR THE AREA AND THAT KUWAIT AND THE SAUDIS MIGHT BE NEXT. KING COMMENTED THAT MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT ASAD HAS MORE NFLUENCE ON ME THA I HAVE ON HIM, BUT LOOK AT THE WAY HE IS TALKING NOW. ASAD IS EVEN SAYING THAT HIS OWN PEOPLE ARE NOT PULLING BEHIND HIM THE WAY THE JORDANIANS LINED UP WITH HUSSEIN IN THE 1970 CRISES

14. KIVNG THEN SAID THAT ASAD HAD SSESSED THE COMMUNITY PART IN IRAQA AS BEING VERY STRONG. WHILE IT COOPERATED FULLY WITH THE IRAQI BAATH NOW IN SPOITE OF THAT SOOPERATION IT COULD MOVE OFF O N ITS OSNW AGAINST THE REGIME.

15. ASAD ASLSO NOTED ACCORDING TO THE KING THAT EGYPT HAD TERMINATED THE SOVIETS FLEETS USE OF ITS PORTS. SYRIA HAD BEEN ASKED BY THE SOVIET FOR USE OF ITS PORTS AND HAD REFUSED. ASAD NOW FEELS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE VERY INTERESTED IN OTHER FACILITIES AND RELATES THIS TO THE SOVIET STAND AGAINST SYRIA IN LEBANON.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 AMMAN 03753 02 OF 02 172011Z

16. ASAD POINTED OUT THAT A SOVIET ECONOMIC DELGATION EXPECTED IN SYRIA JULY 14 HAD BEEN CANCELLED AND THAT SYRI TOOK THIS AS A SIGNAL FROM THE SOVIETS ON FUTURE ECONOMCI AND MILITARY SUPPLY POLICY FROM MSCOW. I ASKED THE KING WHETHER THE SOVIET ULTIMATIM THAT KHADDAM HAD TALKED ABOUT SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT THE SOVIET WOULD STOP MILITARY AID TO SYRIA. KING SAID THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN A COPY BUT THAT HIS IMPRESSION WAS THAT THE SOVIETS HAD ONLY IMPLIED THAT THEY WOULD STOP SUCH AID.

17. FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO THE EMBASSY THE KING CALLED AND SAID THAT HE HAD FORGOTTEN TO MENTION THAT ASAD HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE RIGHTIST WERE IN GOOD SHAPE NOW, BUT THAT IF THE SOVIETS

CARRIED THROUGH WITH THEIR THREAT HE COULD NOT BE SURE HOW THEY WOULD FARE.

18. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT ASA AND POSSIBLY THE KING HAVE PULLED OUT ALL STOPS TO CONVINCE US THAT THE SOVIETS MEAN BUSINESS WITH THE SYRIANS OVER LEBANON. AS YOU KNOW FROM TIME TO TIME WE HAVE RELAYED SEMIPANIC MESSAGES FROM ASAD PASSED BY THE KING. WE ARE CLEARLY IN NO POSITION TO JUDGE VALIDITY. SOME PORTIONS OF WHAT HAS BEEN PASSED ON HAVE GIVEN TO US EARLY BY THE KING. OTHER PORTIONS SEEM TO TRACK WITH VARIOUS REPORTS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN FROM MOSCOW, DAMASCUS AND BEIRUT. IN THE PAST WHEN WE HAVE RECEIVED SUCH MESSAGES WE HAVE LATER TRIED TO CHECK BACK ON WHAT THE KING HAS PASSED ON. IN NO INSTANCE HAVE WE BEEN ABLE TO FIND A SITUATION WHERE THE KING'S MESSAGES HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY CONTRADICTED BY REPORTS FROM OTHER RELIABLE SOURCES. HOWEVER WE CANNOT PROVE THE NEGATIVE--THE KING'S MESSAGES ALSO ARE NOT SHAPED TO FIT HIS OWN IDEAS AND OBJECTIVES. IN THE PRESENT CASE THE KING'S OWN APPROACH IS CLEARLY EXTREMELY CLOSE TO ASAD'S AFTER HEARING THE AND APPARENTLY SUPPORTIVE STORY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET PRESSURE ON THE SYRIANS ARMS RELATIONSHIP, PART OF THE I TOLD THE KING THAT IT SEEMED TO BE A GOOD THING FOR HIM AND JORDAN THAT HE HAD NOT SIGNED UP AN AIR DEFENSE DEAL WHEN HE WAS IN MOSCOW LAST MONTH. HE LAUGHED AND SAID THAT IT CERTAINLY WAS. END COMMENT
PICKERING

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PFOR MOPS LE SY UR XF, MEETING REPORTS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, THREATS, POLITICAL SITUATION, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976AMMAN03753
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: RECATEGORIZING EXDIS MESSAGE TO NODIS
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P850107-2154
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760748/aaaabpov.tel
Line Count: 302
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS; NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: 76 AMMAN 3751
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TALK WITH KING--MESSAGE FROM ASAD
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, LE, SY, UR, XF, PLO, (ASAD, HAFIZ), (HUSSEIN I)
To: SECSTATE WASHDC DAMASCUS SS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006